

Dear Sam,

12/29/90

As you may or may not have observed, I sometimes tell stories that a clergyman may find use for. How I was able to get and read your 12/26 yesterday may be such a story. But first I must say that we both enjoyed your always new string of wit and humor and both wondered how you can have such an endless supply of it with virtually no repetition.

We were snowed in. Time was I'd have enjoyed blowing us out with a fine snowblower, one of the modern tools I'd been able to afford only because of the generosity of, of all things, the National Enquirer. (In one of their uses of me as a consultant I got \$2,500 for less than two days of intermittent work. So I used it to equip myself for coping with the physical drain of caring for out 5+ acres. But now I have to regard myself as a baby and make no effort to handle snow.

I was working on the recollections our friend Joe does not seem to realize can serve as the notes for what he wants me to do, this section well over 35,000 words, when I thought I heard a motor. Peering through the drapes drawn to insulate a bit more from the 20 degree cold I saw a truck I did not recognize, with two men in it. They cleared the 8 inches of snow we had from the lane and enough away from the mailbox, as I learned by going out to it, and never came to the house. It turned out that the man with the truck as a boy who lived across the road, along with a boy who lived almost next to us, used to use the cabin on our place as the kind of weekend retreat boys used to love. So, he remembered. When I learned who had done it I phoned his wife with thanks - he was still out freeing others - to thank her and to ask that he tell me how much I owe him. I went to bed without hearing. Am I talking about a fine man? In 23 years he'd not done this but when we needed it, he was there. Now I'll try to make a standing arrangement with him because it will snow again.

The best part of the National Enquirer arrangement was that I was used as a restraining influence, to debunk some of the wildness and irrationality.

Now come daylight, I'll learn if we are iced in. If not, I'm off to my walking, thanks to John who remembered.

I did not make the eye matter clear. Like Elaine, I had two but had only the one on my better eye removed. It has not returned. Instead there is what I believe is called an opacity and that is what is zapped by the laser. That is not uncommon. I neglected to ask the wonderful chief of corneal service at Hopkins why he said to wait a year. I get so little use of the other eye I think that absent what I hope I do not face, a problem with the better eye there will ever be a recommendation to remove that cataract.

The Gulf situation is, I think, a bit more complex than you indicate. I think it is worsened because of the bush-league leadership. It was an enormous mistake to try to portray himself as other than the wimp, particularly of the brain, that he is he did the self-defeating thing of ordering more military there. I won't go into details but I do think that all he should have done is wait for the sanctions to continue working as effectively as they have been, contenting himself with ridicule and contempt for the Saddamable, and to the degree that enabled, undermining his support from the Arab masses, in Iraq and elsewhere. This could also have encouraged those Iraqis who care about Iraq to get rid of him and the destruction of their country that he entices. And as I've thought from the first, as you may recall, that is the most hopeful solution. Instead, among the many new problems ^{USG} created is magnifying the impossibility of our military living an acceptable life in that hostile environment. There can now, too, be no R & R for relief.

I see no possibility of the Arab countries arranging a satisfactory end by diplomacy. Those who express confidence in this have had ample opportunity to do it. They can't.

I've been reading Wiesenthal's Justice Not Vengeance, it is a remarkable account of a remarkable life and effort. I've just read where Joe's friend Ron Auder arranged for W. to meet Sakharoff in his New York apartment in 1988. I also learned that the fine Calif.

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Congressman Tom Lantos, whose work and integrity and fine intelligence and courage I've admired is among the Hungarian Jews Wallenberg saved, W. conjectures that Wallenberg may ~~xxx~~ have been one of the early victims of the cold war. From what I know from my OSS days Wiesenthal may well be correct, but that hardly justifies what the Soviets did to Wallenberg.

From the remarkably outpouring of excellent books (for the most part really excellent but not all are) on the Soviet spy ring in England we have learned that as soon as we invaded France the original cold warrior Churchill ordered British intelligence to ease off on its anti-Hitler efforts and to concentrate on the USSR. Without question the USSR learned of this immediately from its many effective British agents. The USSR also learned through Philby that Churchill was not giving it all the information it needed in its struggles against the Nazi invaders. Although there were many like-minded in our intelligence, I know of no such decisions by our intelligence. But I do know that as soon as Hitler's end was apparent the OSS did start anti-Soviet espionage and several times was caught. I have no recollections of any of this in Hungary but do have some of successful efforts of this kind against Roumania and Austria. Because obtaining this kind of information was incidental to my work and not part of it - I learned such things only by accident - I can imagine that there was more of it and that with Stalin's rampant paranoia Wallenberg could have been a victim.

One such insanity involved a veritable convoy of Army jeeps caught by the USSR ~~inside~~ ^{inside} Austria when that was Soviet-occupied territory with us not there. They were caught. Another involved about 30 bags of USSR mail and Roumania. My recollection of this is not clear. But how much more was required to feed Stalin's paranoia and to encourage those seeking his favor to feed it further?

The cold war, which never had the basis alleged by its warriors on our side, is the root of the disasters of today and the worse ones of coming days. Aside from the multitude of individual victims like Wallenberg probably was, and what a hero he also was!!!- the superpowers themselves were the major victims. Neither the USSR nor the US will recover in the ^{times} ~~lifetimes~~ of your grandchildren and the world will have been radically altered. The cost and suffering here are always visible and are increasing. This is also true of the catastrophe in the USSR. And the so-called conservatives there have successfully sabotaged Gorby's efforts to bring about the radical changes needed there.

This is hardly a basis for the expression of hope for the new year that is traditional and that I'd like to feel. And nonetheless do hope for.

Best to you all,

